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REVIEWS OF BOOKS

Human Behavior, in its Relation to the Study of Educational, Social and Ethical Problems. By STEWART PATON. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921. Pp. 465. Price \$6.00.

The need of a study of human behavior more inclusive than has been forthcoming from psychologists has often been felt by those who deal practically with human nature, and especially by the alienists. Definite beginnings of such a study have indeed been made, as, for example, by the psychoanalysts after their manner and by Dr. Adolf Meyer in the "Psychobiology" which he has been teaching for a number of years at the Phipps Clinic. Dr. Paton's book is a contribution from the point of view of the biologist and the physician to this same admirable and difficult undertaking. Its main thesis is that adult human behavior can be properly understood only when studied in all the light that can be shed upon it by the comparative study of behavior in less developed organisms—both those lower in the animal series and earlier in the human series, including even the embryo—and of the disordered behavior of the insane. The behaving individual must also be studied both as a unit, neither mind alone nor body alone, and in its dependence upon all its several systems—not alone upon the central nervous system, but upon the autonomic, the endocrine, the circulatory, the muscular, and the vegetative.

In supporting this thesis in detail Dr. Paton discusses the adjusting mechanisms (nervous and non-nervous), personality and its development, temperament, character and intelligence, the mechanisms of control, dispositions, habit formation, the involutionary processes of old age and the conflicts and dissociations of imperfectly organized personalities. Other chapters treat of the historical development of this general point of view, of the methods to be used in the study of personality, of education and of the broader benefits which may be hoped from a perfected science of human behavior. In its major outlines the book is excellent. Its standpoint is sound and the author's insistence upon it is timely; his account of present day knowledge of the biology of behavior is complete and authoritative; he points out many promising openings for research; his incisive criticism of current educational practice is deserved.

But the psychological reader, even though he be a sympathetic one, is apt, nevertheless, to lay the book down with something of disappointment. First because it demonstrates all too clearly that the study of human behavior, though it draws upon established sciences, has not itself as yet fully reached the scientific level. This appears not so much in the incompleteness of present information, which Dr. Paton notes at many points, as in what he himself says incidentally with reference to terminology and methods. On p. 50 he urges the retention of the word "consciousness" in spite of its manifold and recognized ambiguities. On p. 355 he notes that "as soon as we abandon the attempt to seek for rigid definitions we shall—as has often before been the case in the development of the study of human activities—find ourselves in a far better position to interpret the significance of processes which are now only partly understood." And again on p. 372 he warns the would-be student that the successful examiner of personality is "born not made" and that "one may acquire, by diligent practice and long experience, some considerable skill in exploring and exposing the basic influences which condition character, but there is a point in the analysis beyond which the examiner cannot go unless he himself possesses the peculiar adaptiveness and insight associated with a natural

aptitude for making personality studies,"—all of which is probably true, but could not be said truly of a study already upon its feet as a science. Perhaps, indeed, no science of human behavior is possible.

For this cause of disappointment the psychologist may well blame his own over-sanguine expectations, but for two others he may fairly hold the author to account. In the first place the work bears the marks of haste in preparation or at least of having missed a final revision. It is uneven in style; a paragraph here and there reads as if it had been incorporated without change from the author's notes of his reading and in consequence is difficult to understand without as full a knowledge of the original; others are clumsily worded and obscure without even this excuse. Superficial contradictions, too, occur here and there. We read, for example, on p. 81 that "there seems no evidence that warrants the attribution of any specific form of psychic activity to the cerebral cortex," but on p. 63 of "the higher complex faculties described as reason—a function of the cerebral cortex," and on p. 144 that "the higher cortical centers of the brain are those in which the mechanisms of self-consciousness are chiefly represented." On p. 147 we hear of "the vague self-consciousness which dawns at birth," but learn on p. 154 that "gradually . . . as the muscular system falls more and more under the control of the brain and both the sensing activities and their coordinations become greater, there emerges the complex of responses which we recognize as the first indication of the dawn of self-consciousness." These are rather trivial matters perhaps, but obscurity and carelessness help neither the reader nor the cause which Dr. Paton has at heart.

That Dr. Paton's psychological terminology would have been reformed in a last blue-penciling is by no means sure, but it is a pity that he could not have had at the critical moment the aid and comfort of some competent colleague. He would have learned that no psychologist writes of "sensing . . . ideas" (p. 118), or of a "sense of appreciation dependent upon the evaluation of muscular contractions" (p. 141) or of "a sense of credulity" (p. 327), and that no psychologist, except in joke, would give his endorsement to such a statement as that which is cited on p. 279, to wit, that "one-third of our mental make-up is instinct, one-third habit and one-third a process of becoming one or the other." Among the nearly 400 authors to whom Dr. Paton refers there are a goodly number of psychologists, but he has evidently proved immune to their manner of speech, if not also to their manner of thought.

When a science of human behavior comes, if it ever does, it will come as the joint work of the biologists and psychiatrists on one side and of psychologists and sociologists on the other, and each party will have to know well and give respectful attention to the work of the other. Dr. Paton presents us with an excellent account of the data which his side can now contribute. We trust that his acceptance of a place on the programme of the recent meeting of the American Psychological Association at Princeton argues an inclination on his part toward a better acquaintance with working psychologists and a more intimate knowledge of their science.

E. C. S.

Psychology: A Study of Mental Life. By ROBERT S. WOODWORTH. New York. Henry Holt & Co., 1921. Pp. x, 580.

In an easy and conversational style, Professor Woodworth presents in this book his idea of modern psychology, which, as he says in his opening sentence, "is an attempt to bring the methods of scientific investigation . . . to bear upon mental life and its problems." Abandoning the traditional isolation and independence of psychology as a separate science, he adopts the point of view that it is a department or branch of biology. He regards psychology as "the science of the conscious and